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A Welcome Wagon for Defectors

Neglected Soviet-bloc defectors to the United States now have a friend: the recently established Jamestown Foundation, which supports and finds work for them once they have passed through the CIA gantlet. Defectors—even those with secrets to tell—always learn the bitter lesson of American immigration: the streets aren't paved with gold. First, the CIA wrings the refugees dry of information. Then, with a new name and a handshake, they usually are sent off alone. The lack of resettlement aid is due in part to bureaucratic bungling—but also to lingering CIA fears of victimization by double agents. To the rescue: the Jamestown Foundation, set up by a group of Midwestern philanthropists with a wink and a nod from CIA Director William Casey. Run by Washington lawyer William Geimer, the foundation helps people like former U.N. Under Secretary-General Arkady Shevchenko (who defected from the Soviet Union in 1978) and former Polish Ambassador to Japan Zdzislaw Rurarz (defected 1981) by arranging speaking engagements and publishing contracts. Foundation supporters are also hoping that its Welcome Wagon approach will encourage other high-level Eastern European malcontents to come on over.